New Nouveau
Brunswick

A challenge to
all New Brunswickers
to build Canada's
best education system.

When kids come first

EDUCATION

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Premier's Message

As we embark upon a new era in New Brunswick, our government is focused on achieving self-sufficiency for our province by 2026. In order to reach that goal, we must begin with our most important resource, the children of New Brunswick.

As we pursue our quest for self-sufficiency, it is important to remember that the children entering kindergarten next September will be in their mid-twenties and entering the workforce in the same timeframe as we hope to achieve our self-sufficiency goal. These children and others already in our schools today are the youth that will inherit our province and provide the leadership and creative new ideas that will move New Brunswick forward. This reality is a stark reminder that if we fail to invest in our children today, we will not reap the benefits of self-sufficiency tomorrow.

We are committed to having the best education system in Canada because we have to do better if we are to prepare our youth for the global environment they will inherit and live in. And to do better in education than before we require ideas we have not tried before. As a government we all need to be creative and deliver results. We have to work together to ensure we deliver government services in education in a seamless and coordinated way. And we are asking all New Brunswickers to have the courage to make the changes and investments needed in our youth to improve their opportunities for success.

The *Self-Sufficiency Report* offered us several criteria for a high-quality education system which are reflected here. We have met the need for an "outcome-oriented system" by putting in place good evaluations of students' learning, and resources to respond to what we learn. We have met the call for awareness of careers with a commitment to a better guidance program. We have met the need for more trades and arts options for students with those unique strengths.

We are pleased to say that this plan goes even further than we were challenged to go. In a self-sufficient New Brunswick we will need citizens who are creative, think critically, solve problems, work together, work across cultures and borders and who have the ability to learn new things every day. We need to embrace the new technologies of the era in our classrooms and revolutionize how we teach, as greatly as globalization and technology have revolutionized how we live and work.

When kids come first is designed to ensure New Brunswick's education system fosters innovative, critical thinkers who have been provided with the opportunity to find something that has ignited their passion for learning.

When kids come first demands that every adult puts the interest of kids first, that learning becomes an important value of New Brunswick culture, that every child takes pride in learning and that all of our children are helped in every way possible to reach their full potential.

We invite all New Brunswickers to work together in realizing the vision of this five year plan. When kids really do come first we will truly know we are making progress in building a self-sufficient New Brunswick.

Honourable Shawn Graham
Premier

Minister's Message

This September, hundreds of young New Brunswickers will walk into their kindergarten classroom. They'll be nervous, excited and anxious. They'll be wondering if their teacher will be nice, if they'll make friends, and if they will feel like they can do the work they'll be given.

I'll be one of those parents watching my child take those steps into school, slowly, glancing nervously back at first, then as confidence builds jogging with excitement towards this new adventure. I will be anxious for her, too. I want her to find friends, security and confidence on that first day. As a dad, that's what I'll be thinking of. I'm sure those feelings are universal among all of us who send our kids to school each morning.

As parents, we aren't just anxious about where those first steps to kindergarten lead. We should also be anxious about the steps our kids will be taking in June 2020 as well – the steps across the graduation stage. Those steps will be more confident, more deliberate. But they will also lead to new adventures, just as full of uncertainty and unknowns.

What kind of world will our children walk into in the year 2020? What will they need to know? What will they need to have experienced? How will they need to think, to see the world, if they are to succeed? No one has a crystal ball. But we can still picture the world that awaits today's five-year-old at the kindergarten steps.

In the future, companies will be able to move quickly to where the best trained employees are. If our kids don't read, write or do math well enough to learn new skills in a world of constant change, the jobs will move somewhere else – somewhere that did a better job of teaching them.

In the world that awaits, one of the skills most in demand will be the ability to solve problems. Following instructions will be work done in low-wage economies, or by machines. The people who control their economic future will be the kids who went through school solving problems and challenging themselves, not just following instructions.

In the world that awaits, leaders will have to work with a variety of people, across languages, cultures and borders. We need to give our children the gifts of more than one language, of history and of curiosity, to allow them to be global citizens.

And in that global world that awaits, our children will actually need a stronger sense of community than ever before. We're not training employees – we are teaching citizens, parents and leaders. That means we need to make our children feel anchored in a community where their actions touch the lives of others, where we give them a sense of our history, culture, languages and values – and a sense of belonging here at home.

That's a tall order. But it is not unachievable. In fact, it's the very least we must do for our children. And we can't wait until 2020. Every child in the system counts. They need us to start changing today.

When I became the Minister of Education, I didn't have all the answers. I still don't. But I knew the questions that we needed to answer. This plan grew out of asking these basic questions to everyone I could – students, teachers, businesspeople, principals, parents and citizens.

How do we make leaders out of our best, most innovative teachers? Today's teachers are well-educated, top students with a passion for teaching children. Real change means letting our best teachers find new ways to get results and letting them drive change in the system.

How can we intervene more effectively, and earlier, with all learners? An emergency occurs when a problem needs to be solved in a short period of time or consequences arrive. When a child isn't learning, that's an emergency. The child who can't read by the end of Grade 2 may have tuned school out if no interventions are made by Grade 5. Likewise, the gifted child who loses enthusiasm and curiosity in Grade 3 may drift through high school. The child with untreated special needs in elementary school will cost society much more as an adult. In early grades, we can't just follow protocols when kids fall behind. We need to act with a sense of urgency – because the situation is urgent.

How can we give every child a chance to find something he or she loves doing, and is good at? If you take a car trip with a four-year-old, you will know children naturally want to learn. They are always asking questions, thinking about the answers, figuring things out. The school system has to keep that alive – not give kids a reason to turn that curiosity off, but find ways to keep it going. Once they have the basic skills in early grades, children should be provided the opportunity to discover their strengths and do something that makes them want to learn in later grades.

The pages ahead suggest what we need to do to address the above challenges. These challenges won't be overcome just because government decrees it to be so. These are challenges that will require all of us to contribute if we are to give our children the best education possible.

When kids come first is not a plan as much as a challenge. It speaks to the greatest challenge for parents of any generation – to ensure that their children are better off than they were.

We all want that, as parents, as citizens. To do that, we will have to put children first. We will have to put the success of our children above our own fear of change, above the financial demands of special interests, above our desire to avoid tough political debates, and above the comfort of tax cuts and entitlement programs. When we say children come first, we have to mean they come first when it's tough, not just when it's easy.

When will our children come first in achievement? It will be when they come first in our priorities. If we are up to the challenge, this plan lays out the things we can accomplish together.

Honourable Kelly Lamrock
Minister of Education

Introduction

The Government of New Brunswick has set an ambitious target of being self-sufficient by the year 2026. While much will need to be accomplished to reach this target, one thing is clear: the road to self-sufficiency begins with education. We will need to educate our kids to be self-sufficient citizens if we are to be a self-sufficient province.

When kids come first is about putting the learning needs of our kids first when we make decisions about education. However, it is also about putting the education of kids at the forefront of public policy. If we fail to invest in our kids' education today, we should not expect a self-sufficient society in future years.

Today we know more than ever before about **how** children learn. We understand that while children are born with the inherent will to learn, their styles of learning change as they grow older. While all kids of all ages learn best through direct experience, once kids reach adolescence they are even more motivated when their lessons are student-driven and hands-on, or "experiential" in design. Recognizing that these kids go through these different stages of learning means we need to adapt our classrooms and teaching methods to best serve our kids.

It is also clear to all involved in education that student learning is jeopardized if class composition is not conducive to teaching and learning. Every child, and indeed every teacher, deserves a positive classroom and learning environment.

Our kids will be living and working in a competitive and highly interactive global environment, where creativity, problem-solving and teamwork will be the foundation of the world's economy, and citizenry will go beyond state to the welfare of the planet. As a society we are entrusted with giving our kids an education that will offer them a positive future. At the same time, we are also entrusting our kids with our future. We need to make them a priority when we make decisions, and when we make choices.

Our Vision:

We can build the best education system in Canada

The Government of New Brunswick has committed to build the best education system in Canada.

Being the best in Canada, however, is about more than how well we do on international or national assessments. Correctly, parents care passionately about their children's ability to read, write and master math and science concepts. Parents also believe that their children are more than just test scores. We also want our children to be creative problem solvers, to be ethical people, and to be well-informed citizens. We want them to understand the world and to contribute to their community. And we want them to have the skills they need for a lifetime of rewarding work in a self-sufficient New Brunswick.

Most of all, we do not believe that these things are mutually exclusive. We believe that we can help our children acquire the knowledge and qualities we want for them. We passionately believe that New Brunswick can be the best.

The Cornerstones of Change

When kids come first challenges all New Brunswickers to build the best education system in Canada. However, this will require us to make deliberate choices and to embrace new ways of thinking.

To excel at something requires a commitment to make achieving the result we want our highest priority. Just as athletes or artists achieve excellence by dedicating themselves to their goal and avoiding distractions, a province must put the interests of children at the centre of all decision-making in education. This means being guided by evidence and results. It means making tough decisions. It will challenge us to put children's learning before vested interests, political divides and old habits.

These are the values and choices our plan embraces:

1. Students must be at the centre of all decision-making in education.
2. Every child has strengths which can lead to success, and he or she deserves the right supports and opportunities to nurture those strengths.
3. Every community has a role to play in creating a culture of learning and mentoring for children.
4. Every child has an equal right to learn, and this requires parents of diverse backgrounds to be engaged partners in their child's learning from the moment the child is born.
5. Every child that struggles in school deserves a sense of urgency from those charged with helping him or her overcome challenges.
6. Every child deserves a safe and supportive learning environment, and his or her opinions and experiences must be heard if we are to create that environment.
7. Teachers and principals are professionals who deserve the freedom and resources to innovate, and with freedom and resources comes the obligation to be accountable for engaging students, delivering results and leading change based upon evidence.
8. Bilingualism and linguistic duality are gifts our province must pass on to our children, and we must let our teaching be guided by evidence of children's learning, not old debates.
9. Inclusive education is a core value of our system and must be advanced by policies and resources that treat each child as an individual and put his or her success and learning first.
10. Children learn best when they are inspired to learn; mastering skills by following their own intellectual curiosity to tackle new challenges and solve new problems.

Three Clear Goals

In ***When kids come first*** we have identified the three fundamental goals we need to achieve if we are to realize our vision of having the best education system in Canada. These goals recognize and reflect the three fundamental stages our kids will pass through on their journey into and through the K–12 education system.

1. **Every child will arrive at kindergarten ready to learn.**
2. **Every child will leave Grade 5 having mastered the tools to learn – reading, writing and numeracy.**
3. **Every child will graduate from high school having had the opportunity to discover his or her personal strengths and to find something he or she loves doing.**

Commitments

When kids come first makes eight commitments to New Brunswick's children:

1. ***To Ensure School Readiness***	Success in early learning sets the stage for successful lifelong learning. This plan focuses on providing the right conditions for improving pre-kindergarten school readiness and successful and seamless transitions into kindergarten.
2. ***To Work Urgently on Literacy, Numeracy and Science***	Reading, writing, math and science concepts are the tools for learning. We will set high standards for students to master these skills by Grade 5 and improve them throughout higher grades. We will insist on early and timely interventions to aid struggling students and challenge high achievers. Schools that excel at these interventions will be called upon to lead, and schools that struggle will be helped to change. Teacher training and professional development will be a cornerstone of the system.
3. ***To Help Children Develop a Passion for Learning***	A child reads, writes and solves problems best when he or she cares about the subject matter. Especially in the teenage years, a child learns best not by absorbing lists of facts but by solving problems he or she cares about. This plan will give children the guidance and options to discover their strengths and passions, and will give teachers the flexibility, resources and technology to let students use their intellectual interests to tackle the curriculum.
4. ***To Give Educators the Tools to Innovate and Lead***	New Brunswick is blessed with well-educated, passionate and talented teachers. Teachers with good ideas should have ways to get resources quickly to try new ideas, find out what works and learn from each other. This plan seeks to give teachers and principals the tools to lead change.
5. ***To Live Up to the Promise of Inclusion***	New Brunswick is an international leader in inclusive education and this plan is designed to ensure the best interests of all kids are served within an inclusive environment.
6. ***To Engage Communities and Partners in Improving Schools***	This plan acknowledges that success in education is linked to a new alliance between the school and its community. Community schools set the stage for more active community, volunteer sector and private sector engagement throughout our kids' education.
7. ***To Promote Cultural Identity and Linguistic Growth***	The need to celebrate and nurture the language and culture of each official language community is reflected in this education plan. We also need to build our second language capacity in both anglophone and francophone sectors. As well, First Nations education priorities and supports for new immigrants are all fundamental elements of this plan.
8. ***To Create Healthy and Safe Schools***	This plan sets out specific actions required to make our schools healthy and safe for our kids, our school personnel and our communities.

The following pages give a brief explanation of each commitment, followed by the related and specific initiatives that will be pursued over the next five years. Actions identified as ***Phase 1*** are those that will be implemented in Years 1–2 of this plan. Actions identified as ***Phase 2*** are those that will be initiated in Years 3–5.

COMMITMENT #1:
To Ensure School Readiness

Early learning...

A child's formal education begins in kindergarten, but learning begins at birth. Every child deserves an equal chance to succeed in school no matter where he or she lives, or how much money his or her parents make. That's why we need to support learning during those critical first five years of life.

This plan places a focus on being prepared for the arrival of a child at the door of a kindergarten class. Many of the predictors for school success are set well before a child even registers for school. A society that cares about student success in school has to prepare for student success before school. That is why school readiness is a priority of ***When kids come first***.

Phase 1

1. Design and implement the *I'm Ready for School Initiative* to prepare children and their families for entry to kindergarten including an outreach program, school readiness clinics and an early language skills assessment.
2. Improve information-sharing among government departments, to better serve kindergarten children with particular challenges.
3. Ensure that Special Education Plans, when required, will be developed in consultation with parents, in advance of the child's first day of school.
4. Establish new partnerships with the community, including First Nations communities, and the private sector to offer parents greater resources for school readiness.
5. Support provincial efforts to improve adult literacy, including the encouragement of family literacy events at the community level, in recognition of the direct links to positioning parents to better help their pre-school children prepare for school.
6. Support the work of the University of New Brunswick, Université de Moncton and the Department of Family and Community Services in developing and testing an early learning and child care curriculum which is co-coordinated with school readiness indicators.
7. Work with other government departments and community partners to develop universal school readiness kits to be sent to all parents of children ages three through five.
8. Support the Department of Family and Community Services in ensuring training is provided on the early learning and child care curriculum to all child care workers.

Phase 2

1. Support the Department of Family and Community Services in integrating the early learning and child care curriculum into all child care facilities, and ensure that parents and private caregivers are supported in preparing children for the transition to kindergarten.

COMMITMENT #2:
To Work Urgently on Literacy, Numeracy and Science

An insistence on early achievement...

When kids come first recognizes the need to put in place the building blocks for meeting the diverse interests and talents of students. The plan is designed to ensure that by the end of Grade 5, kids have acquired the basic tools for learning. The plan also makes schools accountable for meeting literacy, numeracy and science standards, while at the same time offering supports for those schools that struggle. As well, the plan provides resources for students early on who experience difficulties that may stand in their way of acquiring these basic skills.

Phase 1

1. Launch the K–5 *I Can Learn Initiative* designed to ensure that kids acquire the basics in literacy, numeracy and science by the end of Grade 5. The program will be built upon the following innovations:
   a) Strengthen the focus on, and add new resources for literacy, numeracy and science.
   b) Maintain testing for literacy skills at the end of Grade 2 and testing for numeracy in Grade 5.
   c) Add tests for literacy in Grade 4 and numeracy in Grade 3, and track which schools have the best performance in (i) remediating struggling readers, (ii) challenging top students to improve, and (iii) transforming school results.
   d) Provide a minimum of $2 million per year in new resources through the *Innovative Learning Fund* to support the best practices for helping struggling readers and challenging gifted students.
   e) Improve sharing of the practices at the most successful schools, and ensure specific actions for improvement are identified in school improvement plans for schools in need of improved results.
2. Launch the *Common Ground Initiative* to allow schools and principals that serve similar populations to identify common problems and work together to develop solutions and shared areas for improvement.
3. Work with teacher associations to develop a plan to focus new teaching resources to ensure more individual attention to students in K–3.
4. Provide teachers with greater tools and interactive resources to teach science in early grades in an engaging fashion.

COMMITMENT #3:
To Help Children Develop a Passion for Learning

Diversity in learning...

A key factor in student success is the motivation of the child to learn. When students find something they love to do, are good at, and want to know more about, then they will succeed. The presence of one thing students are passionate about very often raises their achievement in all other classes as well.

Parents know when their kids are motivated: their kids **want** to go to school, they are animated and talk about their learning, and they want to share their experiences. And parents want their schools to challenge and motivate their kids. They want their kids' teachers to be innovators who provide student-driven and experiential learning opportunities. They want their child's unique strengths in the trades, arts, or co-op or volunteer learning to be encouraged.

A significant predictor of a child's success is whether or not he or she has found a goal he or she is inspired to work towards. That's why all children deserve to find one thing in school where they believe they can attain excellence.

Phase 1

1. Develop the *Diversity in Learning Initiative* designed to increase learning opportunities related to the trades and the arts, by:
   a) Expanding courses in the trades and the arts in schools across New Brunswick.
   b) Supporting the delivery of programs in trades and the arts through technology and online learning, especially in small and rural schools.
   c) Exploring incentives for private sector support of opportunities in trades, the arts and technology.
   d) Working with the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport to develop new partnerships with artists, musicians, authors and other cultural groups to provide innovative learning experiences at school.
2. Ensure that teachers are trained, share best practices in student-driven learning and experiential learning techniques, and are supported in innovative ways to use student-driven learning in their classrooms.
3. Expand the department's online *Teachers' Virtual Resource Centre* (the Portal) to include experiential learning related resources.
4. Work with top science educators and non-governmental organizations to engage students in nurturing an interest in science through experiential learning and hands-on experiments.
5. Examine best practice options for alternative learning environments based on the best interests of the child.
6. Develop a policy to ensure that students identified as being at risk of dropping out are given the opportunity to meet with school officials and propose an alternate educational program to allow them to meet graduation requirements.

Phase 2

1. Engage communities and schools in developing local courses and independent study options that reflect community needs and strengths and complement the core provincial curriculum.
2. Encourage non-governmental organizations, communities, the private sector and other involved government departments to increase by 25% the number of co-op spaces for students.
3. Work with community groups and non-governmental organizations to provide additional opportunities for service learning.

Quality learning starts with quality teaching...

The learning success of our kids depends to a great extent on the quality of teaching in our classrooms. New Brunswick is blessed with teachers who have a passion for teaching our youth. With improved training and resources, and with more opportunities to share best practices from across the province and around the world, our teachers will be better able to fulfill their critical role in teaching our kids.

Over the next few years many new teachers will be entering our schools. We need to work more closely with our universities and their faculties of education. We need to ensure that they select the right candidates and prepare aspiring teachers with the skill sets they will need. It is critical to the success of this plan, and the learning needs of our kids, that these pre-service training programs are attuned to the evolving needs of the modern classroom. We need our new teachers to have been trained in specific basic core competencies, including the latest knowledge on how kids learn, their stages of learning, inclusive education, classroom management, student assessment, and adapting the latest technologies to teaching and learning.

We also need to ensure the transition from the university classroom to the K–12 classroom is as seamless as possible for new teachers. The *Beginning Teacher Induction Program* that provides mentorship and resources to our new teachers is a good beginning. We also need to ensure that all of our teachers, from kindergarten to Grade 12, are highly skilled in student-driven and experiential education practices. And we need to promote the growth of the professional learning communities concept, whereby teachers work in teams to improve learning.

Finally, we need a whole new focus and approach to the in-service training of our teachers. We need to focus on constantly improving what we identify as the core competencies, while at the same time allowing teachers to stretch their abilities in the interests of kids.

Phase 1

1. Develop a multi-year professional development strategy, designed to expand and focus training opportunities for principals, teachers and other support staff.
2. Ensure the *Education Leave Program* is linked to the multi-year professional development strategy.

3. Ensure that the curricular outcomes identified are those most important to student success.
4. Ensure the professional learning communities concept is expanded throughout the K–12 system.
5. Host an annual *Minister's Forum on Best Practices* to showcase strategies in the priority areas of: community schools, technology for learning, experiential and student-driven learning, inclusive practices, portfolio evaluation, citizenship and service learning.
6. Initiate a *Teacher Workload* review designed to assess the administrative load on principals, classroom teachers and methods and resource teachers.
7. Review the state of the *Beginning Teacher Induction Program* and explore opportunities to strengthen the mentorship and training of new teachers.

Phase 2

1. Develop a *University Teacher Training Accreditation Program*, founded on core competency requirements for teachers, to apply to all New Brunswick faculties of education.
2. Implement a teacher recruitment and retention strategy to meet existing and anticipated areas of critical need, such as mathematics, science, music, the arts and trades.

Engaging kids as active citizens...

The first occupation for which students must be prepared is that of citizen – self-sufficient people who appreciate the cultures and communities within which they live, who recognize the diversity of the world, and who understand that their choices can and do affect the lives of others around them.

One of the prime responsibilities of public education is therefore to engage students in understanding citizenship and their role as an active citizen in society. The quality of life in our communities will always depend on the quality of our public leaders, the intelligence of our public debate and our ability to understand that our choices must be carefully made.

The education system has a responsibility to help young people to look critically at the world around them, to form ideas on how it might be made different and better and, most vitally, to act upon those ideas as a citizen. Our kids need to be able to show they understand the political, social and economic systems in a global context. They need to be able to demonstrate they understand the social, political and economic forces that have shaped the past and the present, and be able to apply those understandings in planning for the future. And they need to be able to determine the principles and actions of just, pluralistic and democratic societies.

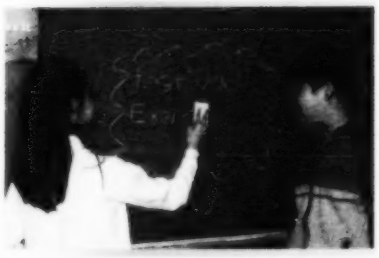
After all, it will be the capacity of this generation of students to solve complex public problems that will determine what a self-sufficient New Brunswick looks like in the year 2026.

Phase 1

1. Launch a *Ministerial Task Force on Citizenship Education*, comprising top citizenship educators and students, to review the curriculum to ensure it addresses the following:
   a) The characteristics of a good citizen.
   b) A coherent and compelling narrative of Canadian and New Brunswick history.
   c) Discussion and debate on world issues that are necessary for informed citizenship in the 21st century.
   d) A knowledge of political institutions which will allow them to participate fully in a democratic society.
   e) An appreciation for tolerance, diversity and pluralism, including an awareness of historical acts of discrimination, exclusion and genocide.
   f) The development of students as active citizens of their community, shaping the world around them through debate, new ideas and civic participation.
2. Include youth, through groups such as the New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth, the 21st Century Initiative and the Fédération des jeunes francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick, in improving citizenship components within the K–12 system.
3. Ensure that environmental science and stewardship are integrated throughout the K–12 system.
4. Use interactive learning modules, such as community simulations, student council elections, mock elections, conflict resolution simulations, and model parliaments and United Nations throughout the school system.
5. Create an opportunity for the Minister of Education to meet annually with elected student presidents and other youth leaders to discuss their views of the education system.
6. Ensure that schools and District Education Councils have formal participation for students in decision-making.

Phase 2

1. Ensure that the multi-year professional development strategy includes training for teachers on citizenship.
2. Explore making service learning a requirement for graduation.



Rural schools...

As one of the most rural provinces in Canada, our culture is one of strong, close-knit communities. Our rural schools are a celebration of this culture.

While an important part of our identity, there is a challenge in providing quality services in some rural areas. This, coupled with declining enrollments, presents unique challenges in providing quality education to our students.

These unique challenges must be met with unique solutions. Using technology to bridge distances is one important way to provide teachers and students with greater access to training and learning experiences in their rural communities. But more needs to be done if kids in rural areas are to receive a quality education. We need to chart a clear, long-term course to provide quality education in every region of the province.

Phase 1

1. Establish a *Rural Schools Policy*, which works in conjunction with a Community Schools Policy, to outline a clear direction for schools in rural areas, and examine the unique funding and teaching resource challenges of rural schools.
2. Explore online homework tutoring services for middle and high school students, especially in numeracy and science.
3. Work with rural schools to facilitate maximum use of the existing 70 online high school courses.

Modern school libraries...

Today's libraries are centres where resources in many forms, both hard copy and electronic, are available to students to support their learning or satisfy their personal curiosity. Today, these resource centres require people with the training to guide students in their search through the various mediums available. They are an important resource for students in the world of the Internet where information is always available, but the ability to scrutinize and analyze information is in short supply.

Studies have consistently shown a correlation between quality libraries and student achievement. In an education plan that emphasizes student-driven learning and literacy, modern and high quality libraries are an important part of achieving success.

Phase 1

1. Develop a five-year plan to modernize school libraries, including:
   a) setting library service standards;
   b) providing training and professional development for library support staff;
   c) modernizing libraries with the appropriate technologies to support all learners;

d) meeting related resource requirements;
e) exploring the improved integration of library staff with the teaching team in schools; and
f) creating libraries that are welcoming and accessible spaces for recreational reading.

2. Work with partners to integrate services and resources as fully as possible between public and school libraries.
3. Design and launch the *Minister's School Library Challenge* to increase community support for and student use of school libraries.
4. Encourage community schools to work with the community to make school libraries more readily available to the local public.
5. Support the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport in implementing a book policy that promotes New Brunswick authors and the development of the industry.

Strengths-based guidance and evaluation...

If students are to develop a passion for learning, they need a chance to discover their personal strengths. This will happen through quality teaching, and by having opportunities to learn through extra-curricular activities, community involvement and independent reading and learning. But it also needs an effective school guidance program and evaluation mechanisms that allow students to see where they can achieve excellence with effort.

Connections with teachers who see their strengths, and take a personal interest in their future, are also a significant factor in a student's success. Too often, however, these connections become lost in the transition from elementary to middle school, or middle to high school. Every child should, from the moment of arrival in Grade 6, have contact with at least one adult who helps him or her discover his or her strengths and the academic and extra-curricular activities that will help refine those strengths.

Phase 1

1. Develop a student strengths-based guidance model for Grades 6–12, including training requirements for guidance counsellors and teachers.
2. Work with schools and other departments to foster successful transitions between the different school levels and among school, post-secondary education and training, and work.
3. Support the work of the Ministerial Committee on Employability in improving transition to work opportunities, especially for children with exceptionalities.
4. Ensure that online resources related to personal development are available to all middle and high schools to help students discover and apply their strengths.
5. Strengthen portfolio-based learning and evaluation, especially at the high school level, and explore the use of e-portfolios.
6. Provide students and parents with better information on a wide range of post-secondary education and training opportunities.

7. As results become available, use the *Future to Discover* research findings concerning transition into post-secondary education, to improve the guidance program.

Phase 2

1. Engage local communities and the private sector in expanding the use and scope of career fairs, including a renewed emphasis on trades.
2. Explore the portfolio concept as part of a student's graduation requirements.

Post-secondary participation and success...

The number of jobs requiring post-secondary education is growing faster than university and college enrollments. This means we must encourage our young people to pursue post-secondary education and training in order to gain the skills they will need to build the future they want.

Many students could benefit, even in middle or high school, from a chance to have contact with a university or college. Dual enrollments offer opportunities to high school students to take initial courses at a university or college as part of their high school diploma. These can provide new challenges for gifted students, give new directions to students at risk of dropping out, or provide a new sense of confidence to students whose families have never had the door of a campus open up to them.

Phase 1

1. Work with universities and colleges to offer post-secondary experience camps to middle and high school students, especially those in groups traditionally under-represented on campus.

Phase 2

1. Implement dual enrollment options for high school students to take community college and university courses for credit towards their high school diploma, and work with colleges and universities to explore giving these students a post-secondary credit with special focus on at-risk students.
2. Partner with post-secondary institutions to determine the correlation between high school marks and success in post-secondary.

COMMITMENT # 4:
To Give Educators the Tools to Innovate and Lead

Innovative teachers and school teams...

Real change in the education system won't be driven by one huge idea. It will come through hundreds of small innovations – the kind of good ideas you get when you free up people to try new things and develop new ideas.

We must find opportunities for our teachers and our schools to be creative, innovative and entrepreneurial in their approaches to meet the learning needs of our kids. We need to create a culture that makes leaders of outstanding teachers and principals. We need to make the sharing of good ideas second nature in our system.

Innovative teachers know what it takes for children to learn. They know how to develop stimulating and engaging projects for students and garner the support of parents and the community, they know how to track student success and use it to their advantage, and they know how to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of their peers in the teaching field.

We need to believe in our people on the front lines of learning, and give them the opportunity and resources to share best practices. We must let them excel and innovate at what they do best – teach our kids.

Phase 1

1. Establish an *Innovative Learning Fund* to invest in innovative projects led by teachers and school teams that can be shared and replicated. The *Fund* will also encourage community and private sector contributions.
2. Support the most innovative teachers and ideas with teaching positions to speed up the implementation of new ideas.
3. Mandate a *Critical Thinking Team* to ensure critical thinking components are reflected throughout the curriculum and evaluation mechanisms, and to review curricular outcomes to ensure that teachers have the freedom to use student-driven teaching models and provide for students to follow their intellectual curiosity.
4. Expand the Portal to create a *Teachers' Virtual Resource Centre* (TVRC) to provide new online opportunities for the sharing of best practices, classroom materials and resources and professional development in all aspects of K–12 education. Further, ensure the TVRC allows teachers to annotate each subject's curriculum with ideas and resources.
5. Work with international partners to expand the "international classroom" concept that allows students in New Brunswick to connect online with other classrooms in the world and engage in learning experiences alongside students in other countries.
6. Work with all partners to provide more professional development opportunities for all educational staff, emphasizing learning opportunities that make teaching more interactive, hands-on and creative for students.
7. Support new teaching ideas and co-curricular activities that challenge and energize gifted students.

Phase 2

1. Work with New Brunswick's universities to create partnerships between education faculties and public schools which allow for classrooms where new ideas can be introduced, evaluated and shared with new teachers.

Supporting innovation through technology...

Being the best in Canada and calling on our teachers to be innovative and creative leaders in our schools means leading the country in providing them with modern learning and information technologies. There is no doubt that information technologies are changing the entire field of education, as they have almost every other aspect of society. Education, the vanguard of knowledge creation and acquisition, should and must be at the forefront of society in embracing this new information era.

Today, technology-rich classrooms can fundamentally change the ways in which students learn and teachers teach. Giving students more direct access to the global library of resources on the Internet means that learning is more student-driven, and teachers become learning facilitators. And that freedom for students to learn at their own pace in their unique learning style will be essential to having inclusive classrooms that are manageable.

Technology alone does not make a classroom more innovative. Nor does every innovative idea require technology. However, when teachers use technology to inspire and allow more learning where students follow their own curiosity to solve new problems, even greater learning can take place.

Phase 1

1. Use the *Innovative Learning Fund* to invest in teachers and schools that use technology to support student-driven and experiential learning models.
2. Invest a minimum of $5 million per year to allow the *Innovative Learning Fund* to provide laptop computers to schools with the best-developed plans for using technology to: create student-driven learning, support cross-curricular studies, or enhance inclusion in the classroom.
3. Encourage and train teachers to use their notebook computers and other technologies to improve teaching, learning and the sharing of best practices.
4. Develop a multi-year plan to create technology-enriched classrooms that house such technologies as interactive whiteboards, FM systems and other appropriate technologies.
5. Ensure adaptive technologies are considered when exploring supports for children with learning disabilities, as part of our response to the MacKay report.

COMMITMENT #5:
To Live Up to the Promise of Inclusion

Responding to the MacKay report...

Inclusive education means making every possible effort to meet the diverse learning needs of all students and to ensure each child reaches his or her full potential. The MacKay report on inclusion provides a framework for doing better, and the recommendations will be used to guide the development of a more inclusive education system in New Brunswick.

In particular there is an urgent need in New Brunswick to improve services for students with special learning needs, whether they are children with learning disabilities, gifted students, or students with medical challenges. We also need classrooms that are welcoming to the learning needs and the cultures of new Canadians. The longer a child goes without getting the help he or she needs, the lower the odds of success, and the greater the risk of his or her disinterest in learning. Help denied today will cost us more tomorrow in behaviour problems, classroom disruptions, and even in demands on other social programs and the judicial system.

Earlier detection, more effective coordination of government and community services, better training, the use of more efficient intervention strategies and a clear focus on meeting the needs of the child, and all kids in the classroom, are all fundamental to improving inclusive education.

The MacKay report notes that an inclusive education system is about designing an education model that best meets the needs of **all** children. In many respects, the Mackay report is also about designing the best education model in Canada, with its focus on meeting the diverse learning needs of students.

The significance of the MacKay report is its recognition that meeting diverse needs requires examination and improvement of all aspects of the education system. Its scope – core competencies of personnel, student assessment, classrooms, communities and discipline and so on – is reflected throughout this plan. The actions in Phase 1 below in this section represent some that will most notably make a difference for students with particular learning needs.

Phase 1

1. Initiate the development of a five-year strategy designed to minimize class composition issues in a systemic manner.
2. Work with the Ministerial Committee on Inclusive Education, front-line educators, parents and community groups to define and promote the goals of inclusive education.
3. Initiate a review of roles, responsibilities and qualifications of key personnel in the education system to ensure they meet inclusion-related needs.
4. Determine core services needed for students with particular learning and medical needs, working in partnership with the departments of Health, Family and Community Services and the Office of Human Resources. Based on this determination, develop an integrated service delivery model.

5. Work with the Office of Human Resources and the Department of Health to identify new classifications for persons providing health-related services in our schools.
6. Begin to increase the number of methods and resource teachers in response to the MacKay recommendations.
7. In partnership with stakeholders, develop an autism strategy including effective training for 100 teacher assistants and method and resource teachers, each year, for the next four years.
8. In partnership with stakeholders, develop a *Provincial Learning Disabilities Strategy* built around early intervention, ongoing support and reducing wait times for services.
9. Identify and share best practices in inclusive education.
10. Explore a partnership with one anglophone and one francophone New Brunswick University to establish centers of excellence in inclusive education.
11. Work with the Ministerial Committee on Inclusive Education, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate and the Office of Human Resources to develop and implement guidelines on "reasonable accommodation" and "undue hardship".
12. Initiate a review of the current funding formula for children with particular needs to ensure funding is more directly linked to student needs and timely access to interventions.
13. Identify the services required to serve the needs of the children of new immigrants, including training in one of the two official languages.
14. Work with the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate to continuously review and improve problem resolution mechanisms for parents of children with exceptional needs.
15. Ensure that Special Education Plans (SEPs) are made more meaningful by requiring schools to:
    a) Provide clear and measurable targets for student achievement in SEPs.
    b) Report how many students with SEPs have met the targets therein at the end of Grade 2.
    c) Develop, in consultation with parents, a plan for improvement if a child is not meeting the targets in SEPs by the end of Grade 2. The plan should note where individualization of the plan will best serve the child's needs and any gaps in access to services.
    d) By the end of Grade 8, ensure that every SEP includes plans to ensure a transition to high school, higher education, work, or independent living as appropriate based upon the child's best interests.

Phase 2

1. Continue to respond to the MacKay report recommendations, such as those for behaviour interventionists, guidance counsellors and resource teachers.

COMMITMENT #6:
To Engage Communities and Partners in Improving Schools

Community schools...

A community school creates a new alliance between the school and its community. Community schools use community resources – volunteer groups, parents, public services and recreational and cultural opportunities – to turn a school into a community centre of learning. A good school must be anchored in a supportive community.

Each community school is unique, which means every community school will have a different mix of services. They also have certain things in common. The community school has a community-based committee that works with principals and school teams to integrate community services with the teaching mission. The school uses community resources and assets to provide additional opportunities for classroom instruction and after-school programs. And teachers in a community school use those resources to provide more hands-on, interactive learning for children. Also, the building is often open for students and their families beyond traditional hours, offering community services.

Currently, there are a number of successful projects underway, in both the francophone and anglophone sectors, where schools are partnering with the community and drawing on their resources to improve learning. One of New Brunswick's greatest strengths is the extent to which our communities are close-knit and co-operative. We should build upon that strength with community schools that bring a community together to teach our kids.

Phase 1

1. Launch up to 30 new community school projects within the context of a new *Community Schools Policy.*
2. Work with the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport to build on the success of the *School Communities in Action* program to provide after-school, early morning or lunch-time physical activities.
3. Work with the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport to implement the *LINK* program in Grades 6–12 to promote safe school environments and use of community resources.
4. Ensure the new *Teachers' Virtual Resource Centre* includes information on community schools.
5. Explore innovative arrangements with community organizations, non-governmental organizations, municipalities and the private sector for activities which expand learning and teaching opportunities in community schools.
6. Work with other government departments to provide relevant community services through community schools.

Phase 2

1. Launch up to 45 new community school projects.
2. Share best practices in engaging parents and community members in the community school model and public education in general.
3. Allow more freedom for community schools to participate in the development of local elective courses and independent study programs consistent with the school's community mandate.

COMMITMENT #7:
To Promote Cultural Identity and Linguistic Growth

As Canada's only officially bilingual province, New Brunswick has established a unique education system with respect to promoting both linguistic duality and second language education for both anglophones and francophones. This commitment clearly illustrates the importance the province gives to preserving and promoting the language and culture of each official linguistic community.

New Brunswick's system of linguistic duality has served us well and we have a province that is a model of bilingualism. Strengthening bilingualism in New Brunswick will require us to meet two challenges. We must strengthen the role of the school as a place in the community where a child gains a strong sense of their own language and culture. We must also ensure that children use this strong base to then branch out and share in the other language and culture. Naturally, we must also do this while being aware that the challenge for minority languages is often a lack of exposure to the child's first language in the community; for the majority language the problem is often a dearth of community opportunities to speak and hear the second language.

Growing up with two languages, which are bridges to two great cultures, is a gift we can leave our kids. They will benefit, and so will our province.

Learning a second language...

New Brunswick has set an ambitious target of ensuring that 70% of all high school graduates will function effectively in speaking their second official language. To meet this target, however, we will have to accept that we are still falling short of our goal, and examine how second language instruction is being provided. We will need to talk openly and honestly with teachers, parents, students, administrators and citizens about how they expect our schools to contribute to a bilingual society.

In the anglophone system, we will also need to improve the balance of inclusive education and French Immersion better than we have done to date. And we must ensure that our efforts to improve school readiness and early learning in New Brunswick are balanced with efforts to promote second language acquisition.

Phase 1

1. Appoint a commissioner to review French Second Language (FSL) programming in New Brunswick with a mandate to consult widely and report by January 2008 with policy options on three fundamental questions:
   - How can we best structure FSL instruction to meet acceptable standards?
   - How can we ensure equal access to FSL instruction in all New Brunswick communities without jeopardizing every child's right to have a classroom conducive to learning?
   - How can we best use community-based learning and extra-curricular learning opportunities to expand ways for students to use and maintain their second language?
2. Appoint a committee to review English Second Language programming and delivery throughout the province.
3. Enter into agreements with community-based organizations to support second language experiences, cultural events and exchanges for New Brunswick students.
4. Examine and identify which regions and districts throughout the province could benefit from Intensive English programming for francophone students as is currently being piloted in the Acadian Peninsula.
5. Provide language training for new Canadians in French or English, as required.

Phase 2

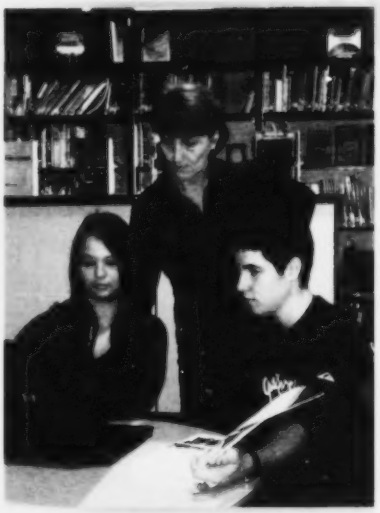
1. Work with the university and community college system to offer summer time living-learning experiences for New Brunswick students in their second official language.
2. Encourage more cooperation and collaboration across the two linguistic sectors in Education in meeting their respective second language objectives.

A strong francophone identity...

For the francophone community of New Brunswick, success in school includes a linguistic and cultural dimension that is vital to its future. In addition to seeing that students learn their language well, francophone schools must also ensure that students develop a strong linguistic and cultural identity. It is through this sense of belonging that individuals will contribute to the growth of the francophone community.

Building a francophone identity in North America is a huge challenge, which is why the francophone school must step up its measures to achieve this goal. Identity building is defined by the attitude, behaviour and deeds of people at home, at school and in the community who foster the growth of the francophone identity.

Teaching children who have not mastered the French language can be challenging. Often, these children need special language upgrading services in order to progress at the same pace as their classmates. As well, parents of these children may need additional supports. ***When kids come first*** contains important initiatives that support building the francophone identity throughout New Brunswick.



Phase 1

1. Appoint a commissioner to review the challenges faced by the francophone sector with a mandate to consult widely and report by January 2008 with recommendations regarding:
   a) The additional mission regarding identity building and education in a minority setting.
   b) Recruiting and retaining children of "ayant droit" parents.
   c) Access to support services in French.
   d) Enrolment decline and its effect on the school system.
2. Work with districts, the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport and the community to develop and implement a linguistic and cultural policy for schools.
3. Support language upgrading for students of "ayant droit" parents who do not have sufficient command of the French language.
4. Implement new initiatives to support linguistic and cultural identity building in the francophone sector.
5. Sensitize all stakeholders to the language rights of parents, most notably for services provided during early childhood.

Improving education for First Nations students...

If education is inextricably linked to opportunity, then there is a great need to work with First Nations to provide more educational opportunities for young people. While the same developmental challenges exist throughout the rest of this plan – ensuring every child acquires basic skills in elementary school, providing more opportunities for individualized learning and achievement in later grades – partnership with First Nations will be essential to offer learning in a setting that promotes their heritage, languages and culture.

Over the past two years, First Nations leaders and officials of school districts, the Department of Education and other government departments have collaborated to identify ways to improve education for First Nations students. Consensus has been reached in a number of key areas where action is believed most important.

When kids come first embraces both the spirit and the findings of this collaborative work. The development of the First Nations education strategy will set out a positive pattern of communities of people working together in the best interests of their kids. The following initiatives to improve First Nations education in the province will be pursued, in full partnership with our First Nations communities and parents.

Nitaniteomanej Mijuajik
Iganigalanetj Mitjoaatjiitjg
Wasisok Tomk

Phase 1

1. Establish new partnership agreements with the federal government and First Nations on improving education programs and services for Aboriginal kids.
2. Establish a new First Nations Ministerial Advisory Committee on Curriculum.
3. Develop and implement a First Nations education strategy founded on the work of the Provincial Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee.

Phase 2

1. Host a *Minister's Summit on First Nations Education* to assess progress and share results.

COMMITMENT #8:
To Create Healthy and Safe Schools

Healthy students, healthy schools...

Maintaining active and healthy lifestyles for our kids is a greater challenge than ever before. Changes in neighbourhoods and new concerns about safety have curtailed the many hours of after-school play other generations knew.

In Canada, New Brunswick scores poorly in terms of the overall health of our children. While the challenge is a societal issue, the school is an important partner in promoting an active and healthy lifestyle.

A child's sense of safety and well-being is an important pre-condition to learning. Bullying, discrimination and violence can have a corrosive impact on a child's self-esteem, on the way in which they interact with others, and on their ability to learn. As well, we must make sure our children learn about healthy living and are encouraged to make good choices that benefit their development and well-being.

At the same time, a healthy physical environment is also important. The average age of a school in New Brunswick is forty years and many of them need significant repairs. As with any infrastructure, failure to address these repairs in a timely manner delays the inevitable and ends up costing considerably more. We need to invest wisely, and on a sustained basis, if we are to avoid escalating maintenance costs while modernizing our schools to meet the educational requirements of both today and the future.

Phase 1

1. Explore new and innovative tools to prevent and reduce bullying, violence, dating violence, homophobia and other forms of discrimination in schools by working with communities and school leaders.

2. Ensure that within two years all middle and high school students and teachers are surveyed for their views on the school's learning environment, safety and prevention of bullying, violence, dating violence, discrimination and homophobia. This will include a requirement to report and respond to survey results.
3. Review policies 701 and 703, placing an emphasis on parental involvement, dispute resolution, student safety, the prevention of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment in school and on buses, assess the effects of these policies on inclusive education and add a *Student Code of Conduct*.
4. Work with the RCMP and other municipal police forces to develop threat assessment and emergency response protocols.
5. Ensure a range of recreational and physical education activities in schools is available and invitational for students with disabilities.
6. Work with the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport to design and launch the *Premier's Pedometer Initiative*.
7. Develop a *Physical Education and Activity Action Plan* designed to meet the target of providing 150 minutes of quality physical education and activity per week.
8. Work with the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport to integrate results from the Student Wellness Survey in the development of physical activity and other wellness-related initiatives.
9. Work with the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport to define physical fitness and its impact on students.
10. Require District Education Councils to develop comprehensive district-wide infrastructure plans and explore the potential for multi-year capital budget funding.
11. Initiate a review of building standards for all schools to ensure they meet all requirements for modern learning environments, including recreation facilities, environmental standards, physical accessibility and adaptability for technology.
12. Conduct an audit of school transportation for students with disabilities.

Phase 2

1. Assist the Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport in organizing the New Brunswick Games.
2. Work with the Department of Energy to evaluate and improve the energy efficiency of school buildings.
3. Work with the Department of Energy to evaluate the fuel efficiency of our school bus fleet and develop a green transportation plan.
4. Develop a plan to reduce by 25%, in constant dollars, the energy and maintenance costs of school buildings in New Brunswick.

Targets and Accountability

Realizing our vision of having the best education system in Canada means significant improvements must be realized throughout the system. We need to set clear targets and standards to be achieved, and we must also be able to monitor our progress as we move forward. We also need to be prepared to modify our approaches based on the best research and evidence.

A number of specific targets have already been established in the areas of academic achievement and will continue to be used to monitor our progress in these areas.

However, we cannot rely solely on provincial, national and international assessments of academic achievement as indicators, because we want to achieve so much more for our students. Our definition of "best" involves areas outside of the typical academic assessment regime.

Therefore, a balanced scorecard model has been developed. This concept is essentially a composite index, whereby a range of indicators is used to determine whether the education system is improving relative to our current status and the targets and standards identified.

The chart below outlines the balanced scorecard model as it currently exists. Over the months and years ahead this model may well evolve and be refined as we gain knowledge and experience. All targets are expected to be achieved by 2013.

A Balanced Scorecard for New Brunswick

1. All kids come to kindergarten school-ready.
2. 80% of kids identified as requiring a Special Education Plan for kindergarten have the plan in place upon arrival in September.
3. 90% of parents of children entering kindergarten participate in the *I'm Ready for School Initiative* at their neighbourhood school.
4. 90% of kids reach the reading standard at Grade 2 and again at Grade 4; 20% exceed it.
5. 90% of kids reach the numeracy standard at Grade 3 and again at Grade 5; 20% exceed it.
6. 85% of students reach or exceed the standard in Grades 6-12 on provincial assessments of literacy, numeracy and science.
7. The top 20% of New Brunswick students on literacy, numeracy and science assessments achieve at a level comparable with their peers in Canada's top three provinces.
8. 70% of high school graduates are able to function effectively in speaking their second official language.
9. NB ranks among the top three in the country on national and international assessments in literacy, numeracy and science.
10. NB's post-secondary participation rate is among the top three in Canada, and an increasing proportion obtain a post-secondary credential.
11. NB is in the top three provinces in Canada for high school graduation.
12. First Nations students achieve at levels comparable with their peers on provincial assessments.
13. 90% of high school graduates report that they intend to vote in the first election for which they are eligible (federal, provincial, municipal).
14. The percentage of children and youth who are considered active enough for optimal growth and development increases by 10 percentage points.
15. At least 75 community schools are operating in New Brunswick, with support from the community and the private sector.

16 An increasing percentage of students in Grades 6-12 report they feel safe and belong in their school; the level of safety reported by students with particular learning challenges is comparable to the level reported by other students; bullying behaviours decrease steadily in New Brunswick schools.

17 90% of students and parents report that students received the services they needed to support their learning.

18 80% of students with Special Education Plans are meeting identified learning outcomes, and interventions are in place for the remaining 20%.

19 100% of schools have adequate emergency preparedness plans and lock-down procedures in place, in collaboration with appropriate authorities.

20 90% of teachers report they have been successful in integrating technology in teaching their students.

21 90% of graduates report that they have had opportunities to take courses in the trades, the arts, or co-op or volunteer experience.

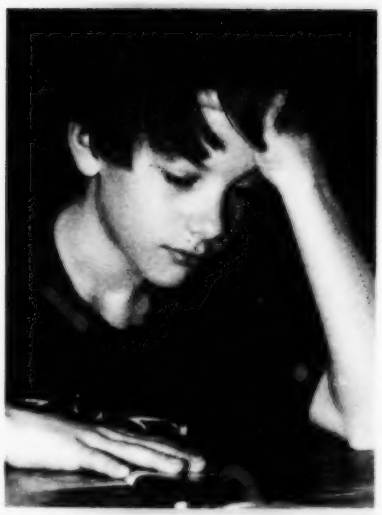
22 An increasing percentage of principals report that projects from the *Innovative Learning Fund* are having a positive impact on teaching and learning in their schools.

23 An increasing percentage of teachers report that gifted students are given the opportunity to reach their full potential at school.

Outlined below are a number of additional actions that will be pursued to help ensure New Brunswick's education system is accountable and transparent – for the public, parents and learners.

Phase 1

1. Establish a province-wide *Learning Accountability Team* model to ensure appropriate interventions have been provided to children struggling to learn, and identify additional supports as required.
2. Report annually on key progress indicators through a balanced scorecard model.
3. Ensure more information on school and system performance is made public and available online.
4. Ensure that the Minister of Education appears before a committee of the Legislative Assembly to report on progress, with the Ministers of Health and Family and Community Services, given their mandates to provide services to children in schools.
5. Work with education partners to develop an *Assessment Policy Framework* that clearly articulates what is tested, why and how, and that ensures provincial testing reflects critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
6. Work with partner provinces through the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training to share best practices and develop solutions to mutual challenges.
7. Ensure *School Improvement Plans* include progress indicators relating to inclusive education.
8. Hold annual individual meetings with school districts to discuss *District Improvement Plans* and performance reports.



Phase 2

1. Initiate a review of instructional time and time on task in New Brunswick.
2. Ensure that student files are shared, in an appropriate way, between schools that a child attends.
3. Provide individualized assessment results to teachers before students enter middle school and high school as part of the electronic student record.
4. Propose to a committee of the Legislative Assembly that it launch a dialogue with New Brunswickers on developing a culture of learning and achievement in the province.
5. Ensure policies and practices regarding promotion and graduation demand high student achievement standards.

Governance

Public education in New Brunswick has a unique governance model and relies heavily on a cooperative and coordinated effort between locally elected decision-makers and the provincial government. Fourteen District Education Councils (DECs), comprising locally elected volunteers, have important responsibilities and offer strategic leadership at the local level in meeting government's overall goals for the education system.

We are committed to working with the DECs in the best interests of our kids and will be actively encouraging existing and new candidates to offer in the next elections. At the same time we will work closely together to ensure effective and efficient coordination in the delivery of our education agenda.

Working Together: A New Education Covenant

Whether we are parents or not, we know that the future of our province depends on the skills and abilities of our young people. The quality of our children's education will affect our economic growth and the quality of the social programs government can offer.

Government alone will not meet the goals and commitments outlined in this plan. But together, as a community, we can.

In fall 2007, the Minister of Education will release an ***Education Covenant for Our Children***. This Covenant will be a symbol of our collective commitment to our kids' education, listing commitments different stakeholders and citizens must take to realize the ambitious goals of this plan. We have to make a promise to our kids, and to each other, that we will all take an active interest in their learning and achievement. We believe that by committing together to give our children the very best education to start their lives, we can achieve this goal and put New Brunswick on the road to self-sufficiency by 2026.

Summary

The timelines and actions of this plan are ambitious and will challenge all New Brunswickers if we are to be successful. However, every parent knows how quick and how fleeting the journey to adulthood can be. We must all be committed to these actions if our goal is to be realized. We hope the vision of this plan and the needs of our kids will inspire citizens to collective action.